

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 4198

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, PINS, SU, LE, SY, UR
SUBJECT: NIMEIRI AIDE COMMENTS ON LEBANON AND MIDDLE EAST

1. DURING MEETING SEPTEMBER 9 WITH MIN PRESIDENCY AFFAIRS
DR. BAHA EL-DIN IDRIS TO DISCUSS NIMEIRI VISIT TO U.S.,
I INQUIRED ABOUT RECENT PRESS REPORTS THAT SUDAN CONTINGENT
TO ADF WILL BE WITHDRAWN. REPORTS WERE BASED ON NIMEIRI
INTERVIEW WITH LEBANESE MAGAZINE AL-SAYYAD.

2. DR. BAHA SAID TO IGNORE SAYYAD ARTICLE. SUDAN CONTINGENT
TO ADF NOT RPT NOT BEING WITHDRAWN, HE SAID. HE ALSO
ADVISED USG TO IGNORE SAYYAD REPORT OF WHAT NIMEIRI HAD TO
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SAY ABOUT CAMP DAVID SUMMIT. DR. BAHA REITERATED NIMEIRI'S
STRONG SUPPORT FOR CAMP DAVID MEETING AND SAID MORE
THAN EVER NIMEIRI IS CONVINCED PEACEFUL SOLUTION MUST
BE FOUND TO MIDDLE EAST PROBLEMS. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT
SUDANESE LEADERS ARE CONCERNED THAT CONTINUED STRIFE IN
MIDDLE EAST IS DRAWING RESOURCES AWAY FROM MORE URGENT
TASKS.

3. DR. BAHAM THEN SAID SUDAN'S PRINCIPAL FEAR IS THAT SOVIETS WILL EMERGE STRONGER IN MIDDLE EAST. SYRIAN FOMIN KHADDAM'S RECENT CALL FOR ARAB-SOVIET SECURITY AGREEMENTS DISTURBED HIM GREATLY. HE CLAIMED SOVIETS TOGETHER WITH LIBYANS WERE BEHIND RECENT FIGHTING IN LEBANON. HE SAID KEY TO PEACE IN MIDEAST OVER LONG TERM WAS TO CONTAIN SOVIET EXPANSIONIST AIMS IN REGION.

4. COMMENT: I THINK DR. BAHAM IS FAITHFUL IN DESCRIBING NIMEIRI'S INTENSE YEARNING FOR PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM AND, AS HE SAYS, IT IS BECAUSE OF FEAR OF SOVIET AIMS NOT ONLY IN MIDDLE EAST BUT IN AFRICA AS WELL. SUDANESE FEEL PARTICULARLY THREATENED BY SOVIET-LIBYAN AND SOVIET-ETHIOPIAN COOPERATION. SURPRISINGLY, DR. BAHAM SAID NOTHING ABOUT ISRAELI ROLE ON LEBANON. RATHER HE SAW SYRIANS BEING PUSHED BY SOVIETS AS MOST SERIOUS DANGER. WHETHER NIMEIRI WOULD AGREE COMPLETELY IS HARD TO SAY. APPARENTLY HE WILL KEEP SUDANESE BATALLION IN LEBANON, DESPITE PRESS REPORTS TO CONTRARY. I THINK NIMEIRI PROBABLY DOES PLACE LEBANESE EVENTS IN BROADER CONTEXT NOT ONLY OF MIDDLE EAST BUT ALSO OF LONG TERM SOVIET OBJECTIVES IN MIDDLE EAST/AFRICA AND THIS IS HIS PRINCIPAL FOREIGN AFFAIRS WORRY AT PRESENT.
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